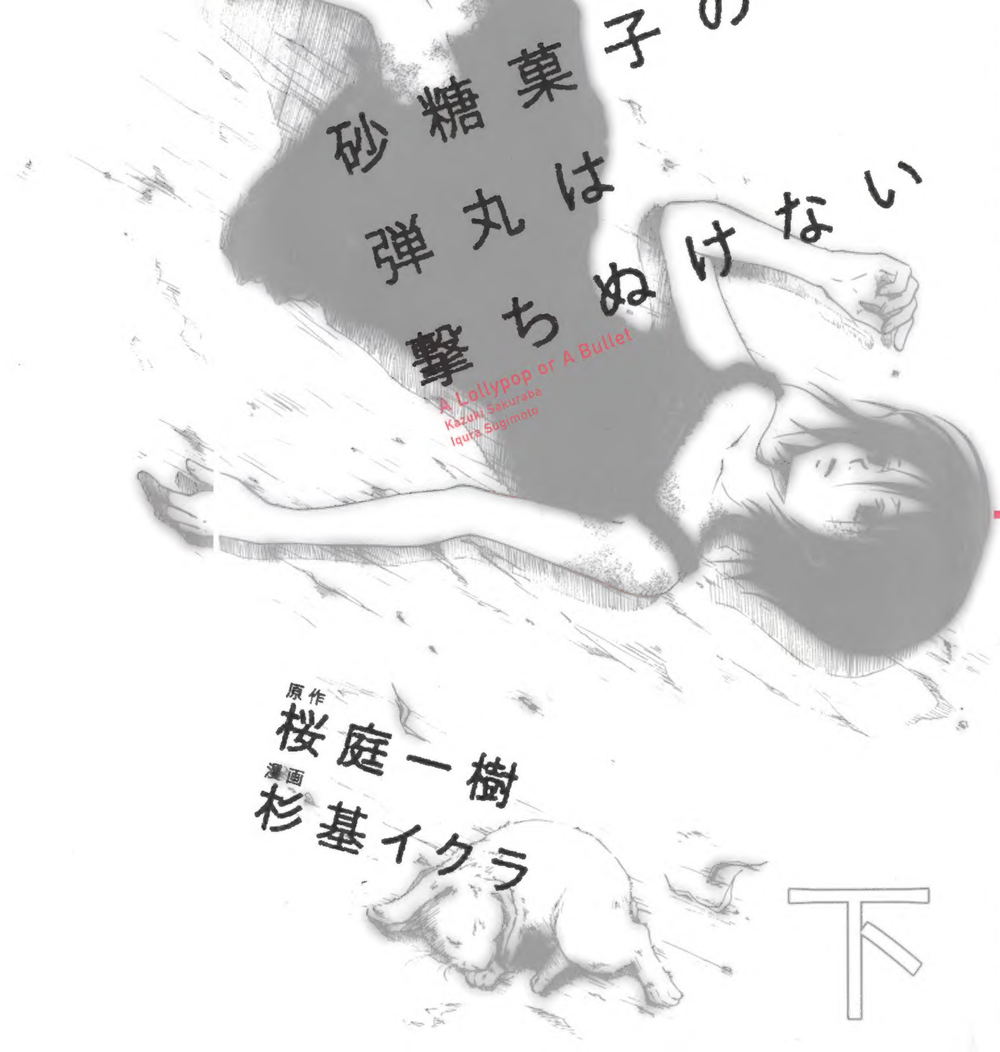

A Lollypop or A Bullet

砂糖菓子の弾丸は撃ちぬけない 下

原作 桜庭一樹 Kazuki Sakuraba

漫画 杉基イクラ Iqura Sugimoto

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A Lollypop or A Bullet　Kazuki Sakuraba + Iqura Sugimoto

Profile

桜庭一樹
Kazuki Sakuraba

島根県生まれ。鳥取県出身。1999年「夜空に、満天の星」で第1回ファミ通エンタテインメント大賞佳作入選。2007年『赤朽葉家の伝説』で第60回日本推理作家協会賞受賞。2008年『私の男』で第138回直木賞受賞。著作に『GOSICK』シリーズ、『砂糖菓子の弾丸は撃ちぬけない』『少女には向かない職業』など多数。

杉基イクラ
Iqura Sugimoto

北海道生まれ。本作が『Variante-ヴァリアンテ-』（全4巻）に続く長編2作目となる。

砂糖菓子の弾丸は撃ちぬけない

原作 桜庭一樹
漫画 杉基イクラ

下

satougashi no dangan wa uchinukenai
a lollypop or a bullet

scene 8: My Bloody Valentine

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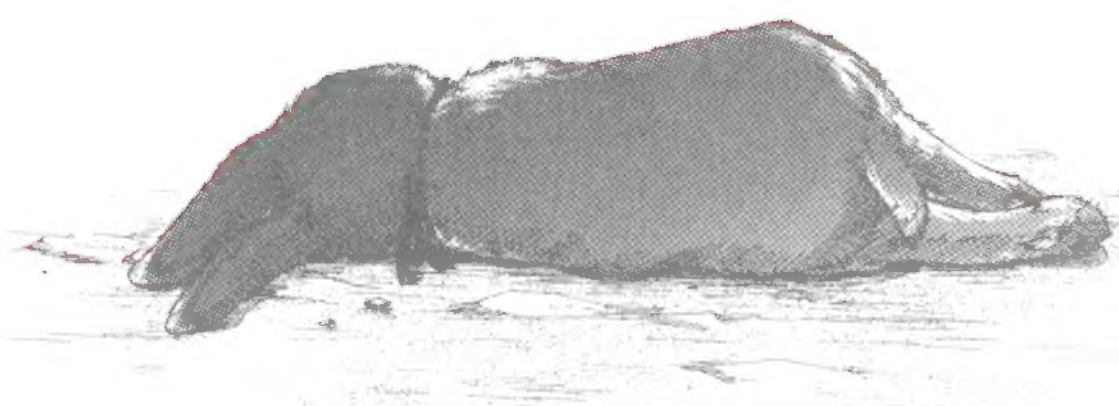
砂糖菓子の弾丸は撃ちぬけない

A Lollypop or A Bullet

下

原作 桜庭一樹 Kazuki Sakuraba

漫画 杉基イクラ Iqura Sugimoto



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I walk,

In the morning mist,

With a chest full of unease.

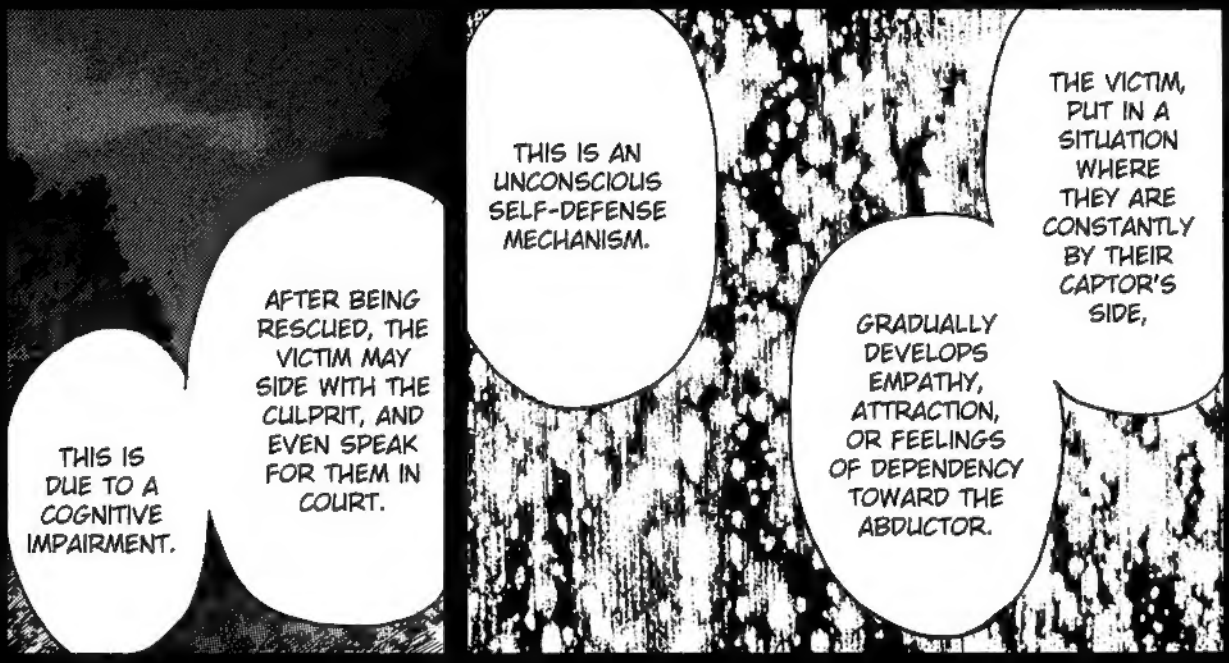
NAGISA,
HAVE YOU HEARD OF "STOCKHOLM SYNDROME?"
IT'S NAMED AFTER REAL EVENTS THAT OCCURRED IN STOCKHOLM.
IT'S A PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENON COMMON TO KIDNAP VICTIMS.

Walking by my side,

In a quiet and indifferent voice,

Tomohiko brought up the topic of kidnapping.

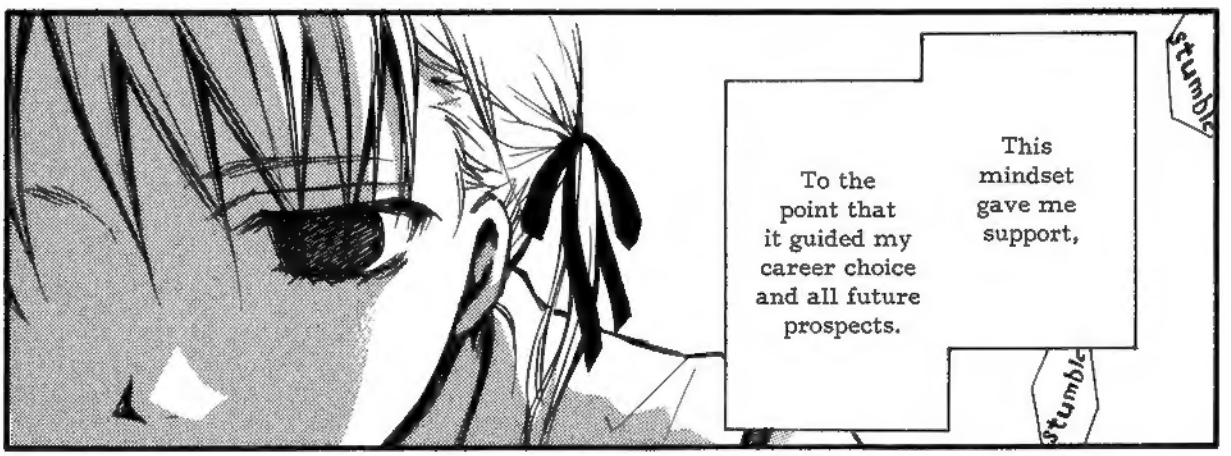
Scene.8


AFTER BEING RESCUED, THE VICTIM MAY SIDE WITH THE CULPRIT, AND EVEN SPEAK FOR THEM IN COURT.
THIS IS DUE TO A COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT.
THIS IS AN UNCONSCIOUS SELF-DEFENSE MECHANISM.
THE VICTIM, PUT IN A SITUATION WHERE THEY ARE CONSTANTLY BY THEIR CAPTOR'S SIDE,
GRADUALLY DEVELOPS EMPATHY, ATTRACTION, OR FEELINGS OF DEPENDENCY TOWARD THE ABDUCTOR.

As I listened to Tomohiko's voice,
THOUGH IF YOU ASK ME,
THIS CONDITION ISN'T UNIQUE TO HOSTAGES.
I thought of Mokuzu Umino.

Scene.8 My Bloody Valentine

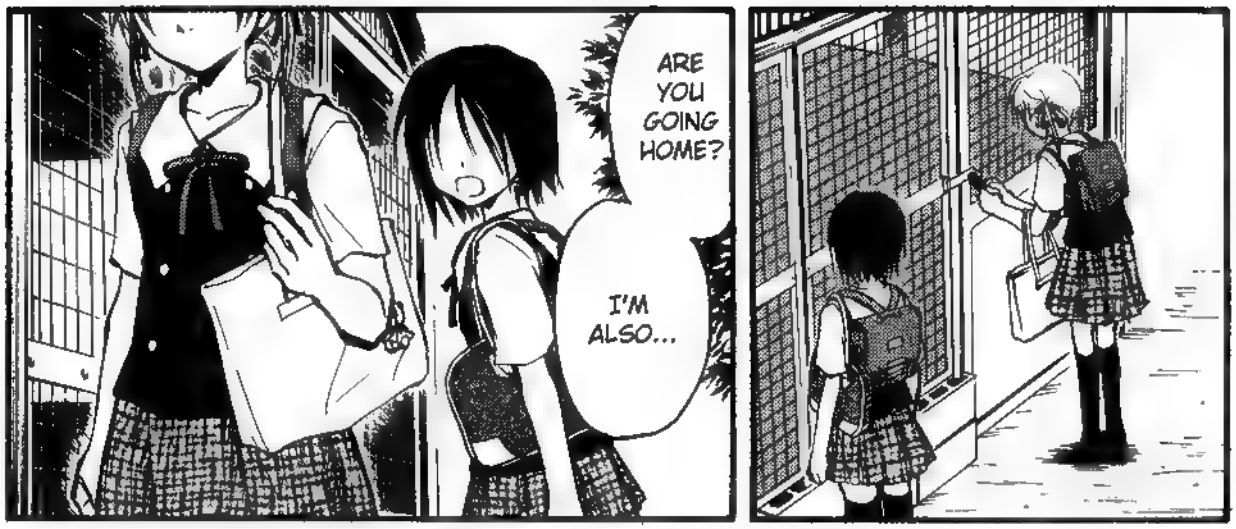
I've always considered myself
An unfortunate and pitiable child.

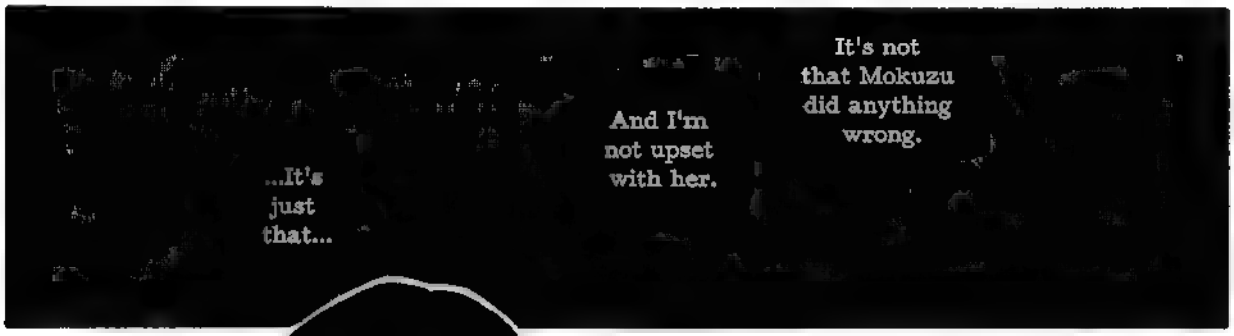

This mindset gave me support,
To the point that it guided my career choice and all future prospects.
stumble
stumble

stumble

Ever since that incident at Mt. Nina,

I've been keeping my distance from Mokuzu.

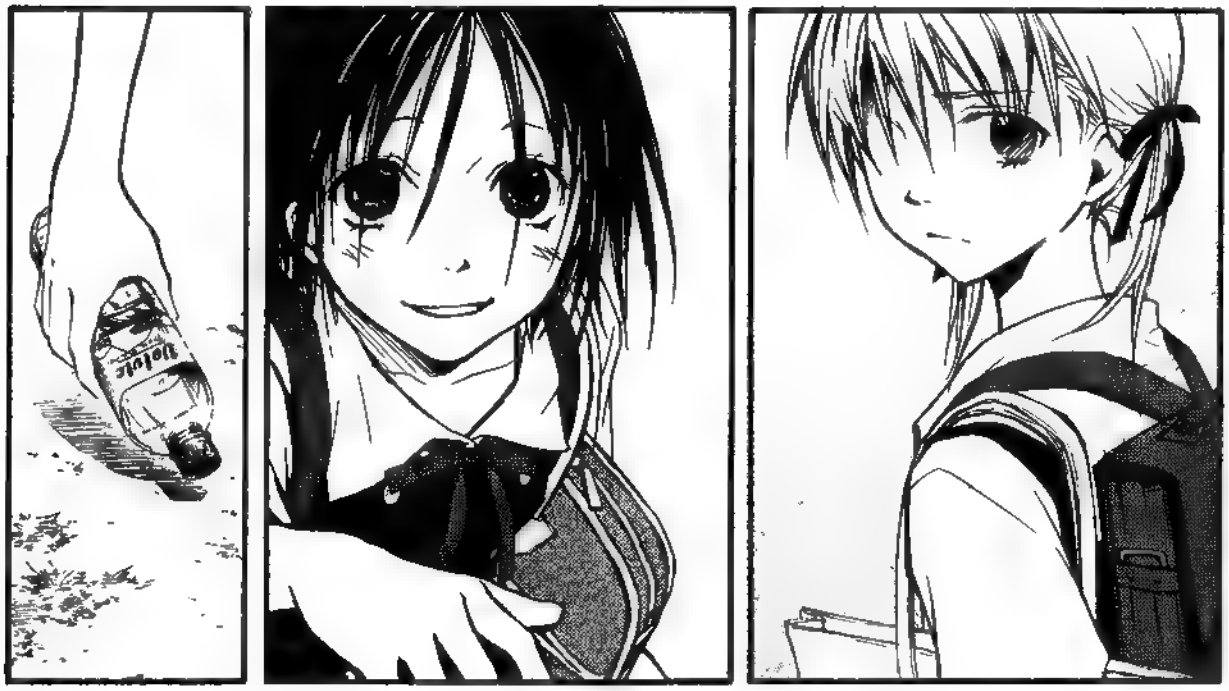

ARE YOU GOING HOME?
I'M ALSO...


It's not that Mokuzu did anything wrong.
And I'm not upset with her.
...It's just that...

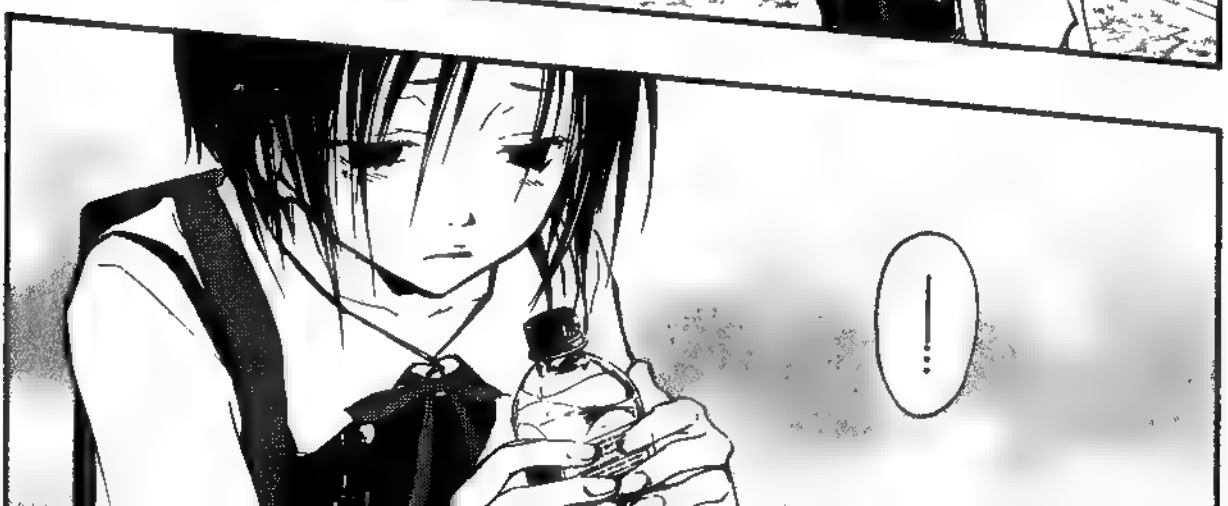
...

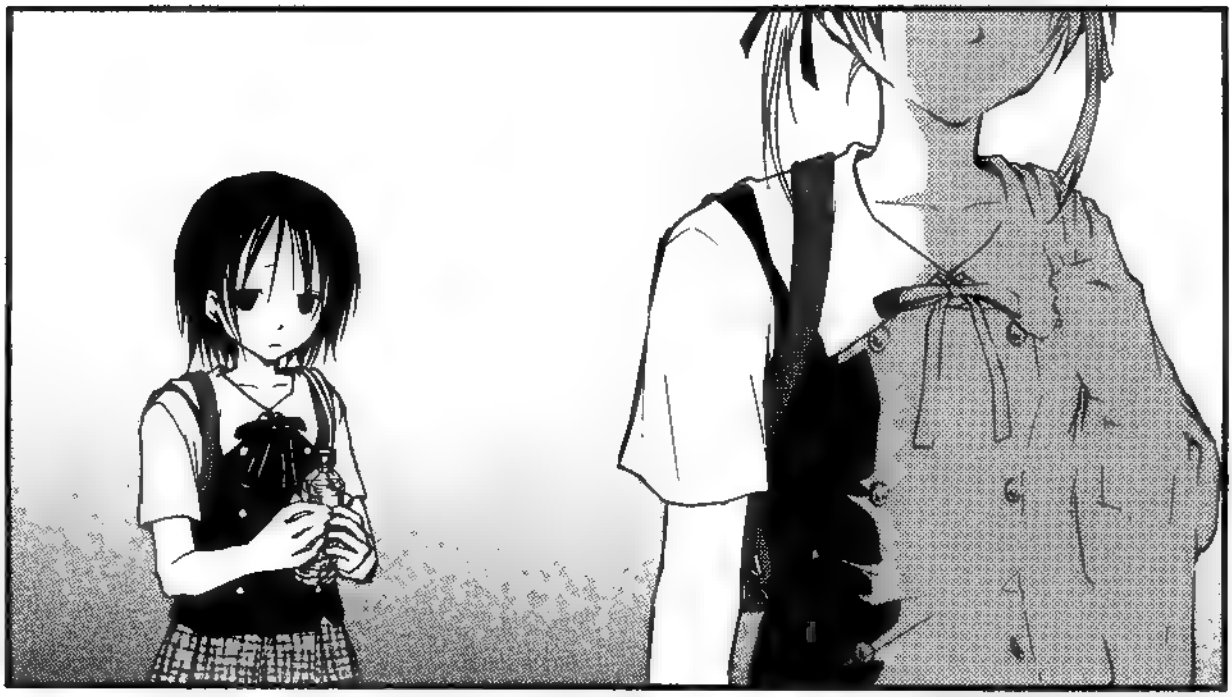
Against Mokuzu Umino, who is much, much more misfortunate than I am,
stumble
I can't help but feel kind of threatened.
NAGISA YAMADA...!

SLOOSH

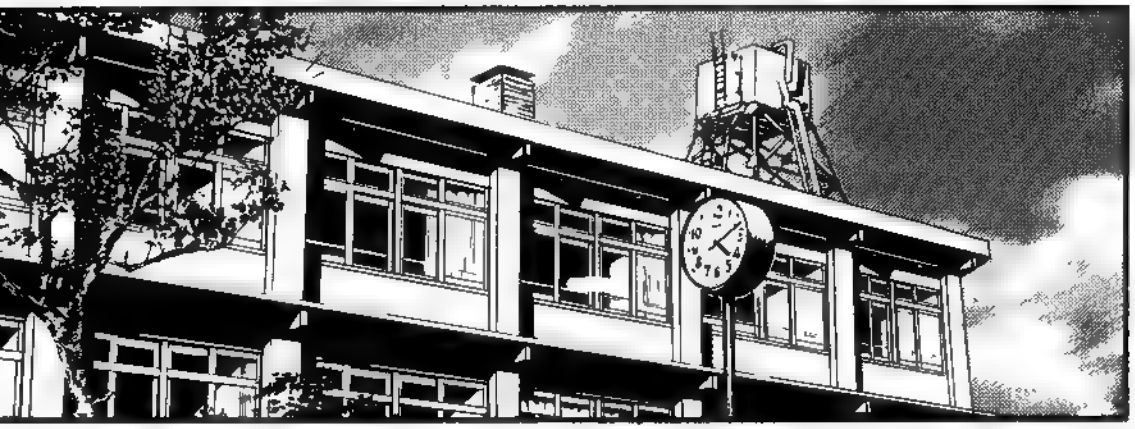


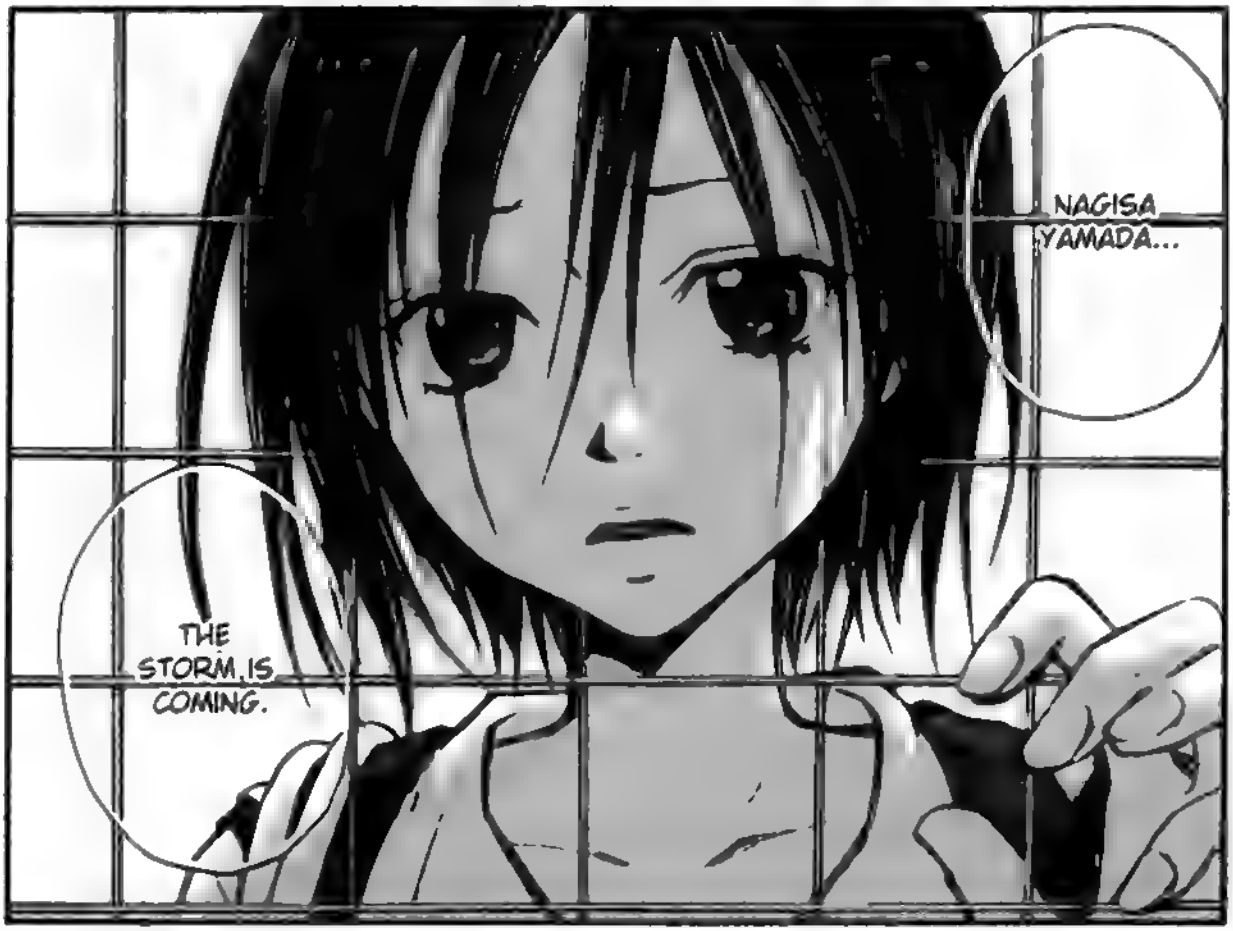
HERE...


!...

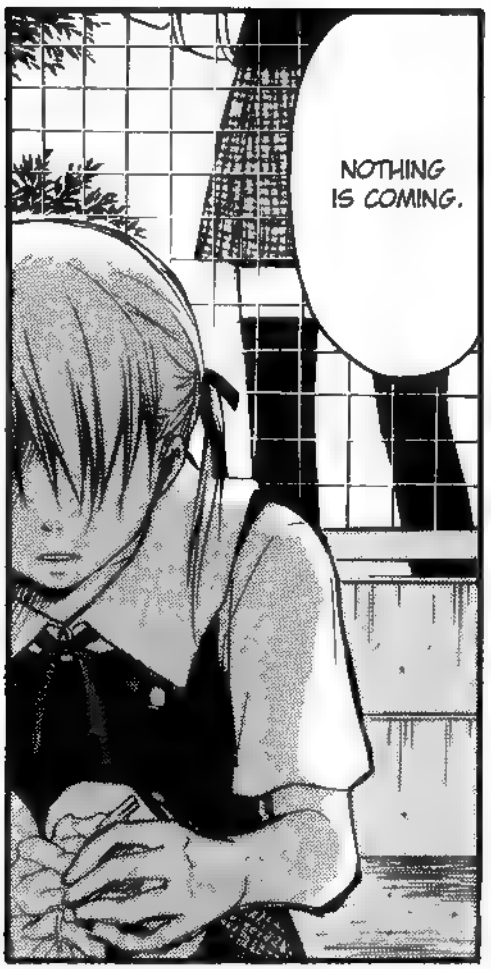


As these events repeated,
September came to an abrupt end.




NAGISA YAMADA...
THE STORM IS COMING.

Mokuzu's at it again, firing those overly sweet candy bullets with all her might.



MERMAIDS FROM EVERY SEA IN THE WORLD WILL RETURN,
BOATS WILL SINK,
THE COASTLINE WILL DISTORT,
STOP IT!
BECAUSE I AM THE PRINCESS...

...WHY ARE YOU UPSET?
DON'T TALK ABOUT BOATS SINKING...!
!
Using my father's death at sea as fodder for her lies...
Or hurting me by speaking so tactlessly.
...
DURING THE STORM,
BUNCHES AND BUNCHES OF MERMAID EGGS WILL BE LAID IN THE SEA.
...Even if I say those things to Mokuzu, she wouldn't understand.

clack
BUNCHES AND BUNCHES...
fwissh...
DO YOU WANT TO LOOK AFTER THE RABBITS TOGETHER?
WELL...
Why...?
...
—YES!
To hate Mokuzu, even when she's like this?
Why can't I bring myself...

RABBITS ARE CUTE BUT SMELLY, HUH?
HUMANS WOULD STINK TOO, IF THEY DIDN'T BATHE.
cough
cough
fwissh
...AH, BUT MY BROTHER DOESN'T SMELL.
EVEN THOUGH HE ONLY SHOWERS ONCE A WEEK.
WOW. WHAT AN AMAZING BROTHER!
HE DOESN'T STINK!
NOT AT ALL! HE EVEN HAS A COOL REFRESHING SCENT,
LIKE A PRINCE.
...HMM~

...YEAH.
SO YOU LIKE TO LOOK AFTER RABBITS, NAGISA YAMADA.
Y- ...YEAH.
YOU ALSO LIKE TO LOOK AFTER YOUR BROTHER.
NAGISA YAMADA IS A CARETAKER...

TOMOHIKO SAW THROUGH YOUR TRICK.
MY TRICK?
OH YEAH,
Click
PSYCHOLOGICAL MISDIRECTION.
YOU USED A MENTAL TRICK, DIDN'T YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU GOING ON ABOUT? I DON'T LIKE IT AT ALL! FOAM IS FOAM, YOU KNOW.
THAT TRICK WHERE YOU TURNED INTO FOAM AND DISAPPEARED FROM THE ROOM.
TOMOHIKO THINKS YOU'RE AN INCREDIBLE CHILD; HE SEEMS TO HAVE TAKEN A LIKING TO YOU.
HAHA HAHAHA!
... HAHA,

IF YOU SEEK EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE, YOU HAVE TO USE THE INTERNET!
HMM~

YAMADA'S BROTHER AND I MUST READ THE SAME WEBSITE.
WEB-SITE?

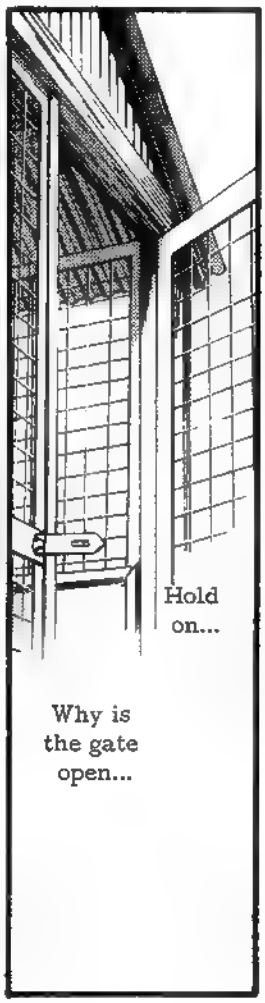
...RIGHT.
I'LL COMPLETELY CHANGE TO FOAM!
NEXT TIME, I WON'T LET HIM FIGURE IT OUT!
TELL YOUR BROTHER THIS.
NAGISA YAMADA.
WHAT IS IT?

The next morning,
Strange incidents continued to happen...

KANAJIMA?
!

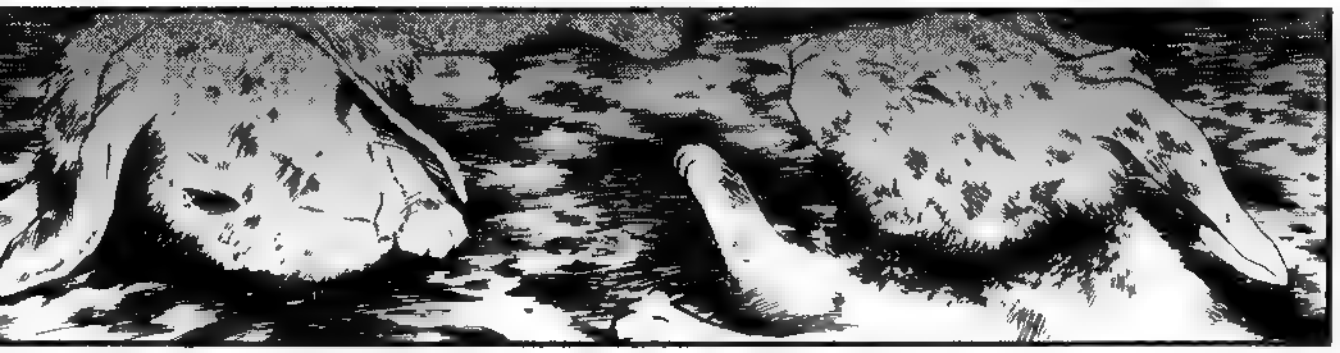
HUH?

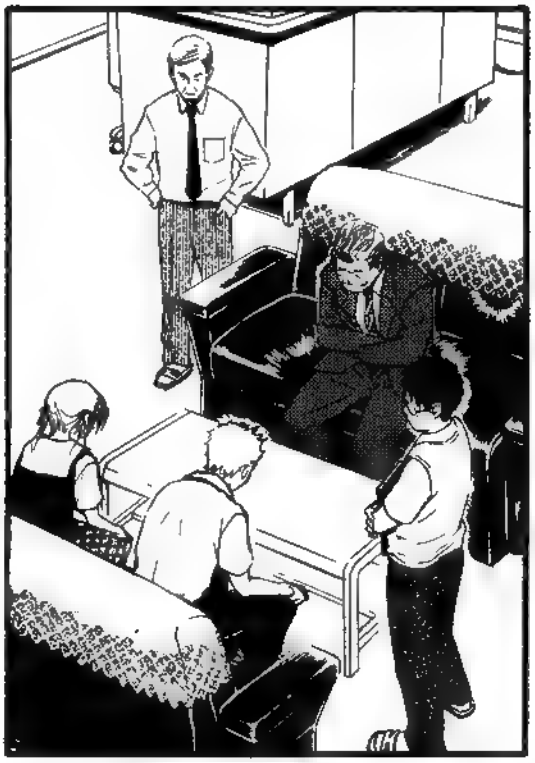
...
YAMADA,


Hold on...
Why is the gate open...

WH- WHAT IS IT? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
MORNING PRACTICE?

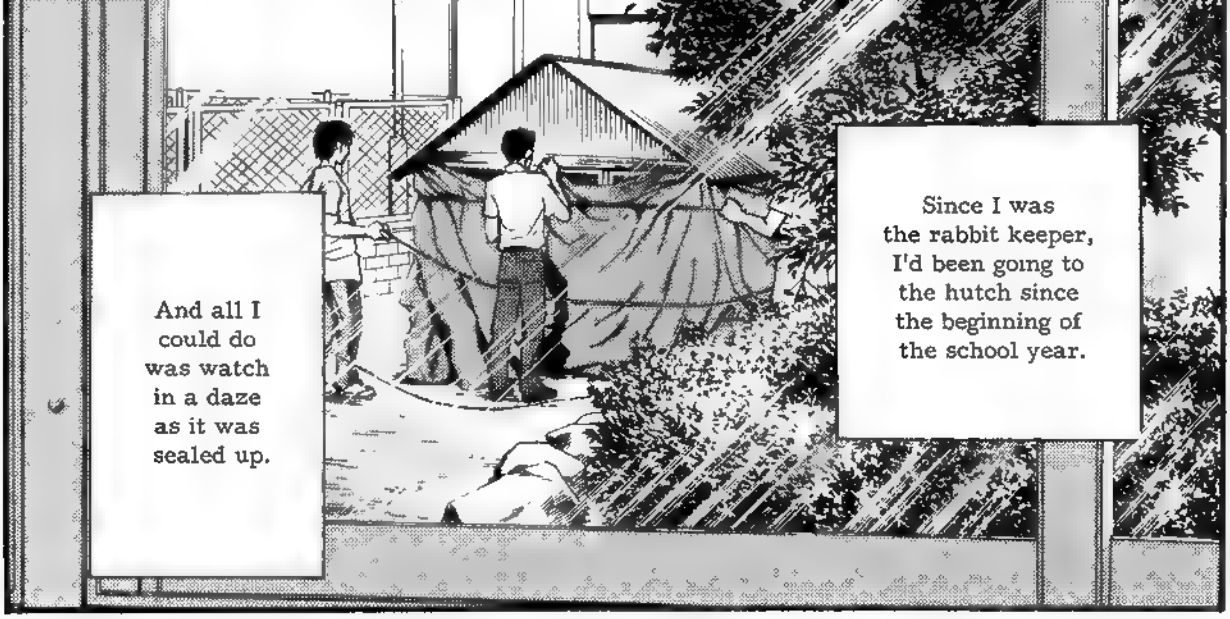
drip
drip
...HUH?
THIS IS THE ONLY ONE WITHOUT A HEAD, YAMADA.
I SEARCHED, AND...
THERE'S NO HEAD.

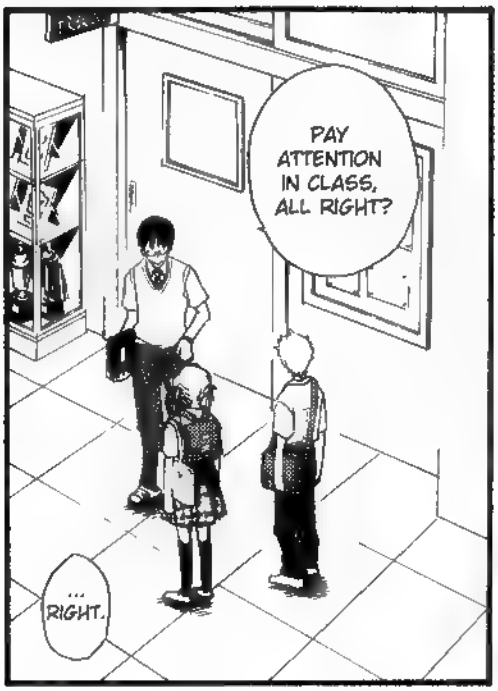




Kanajima...

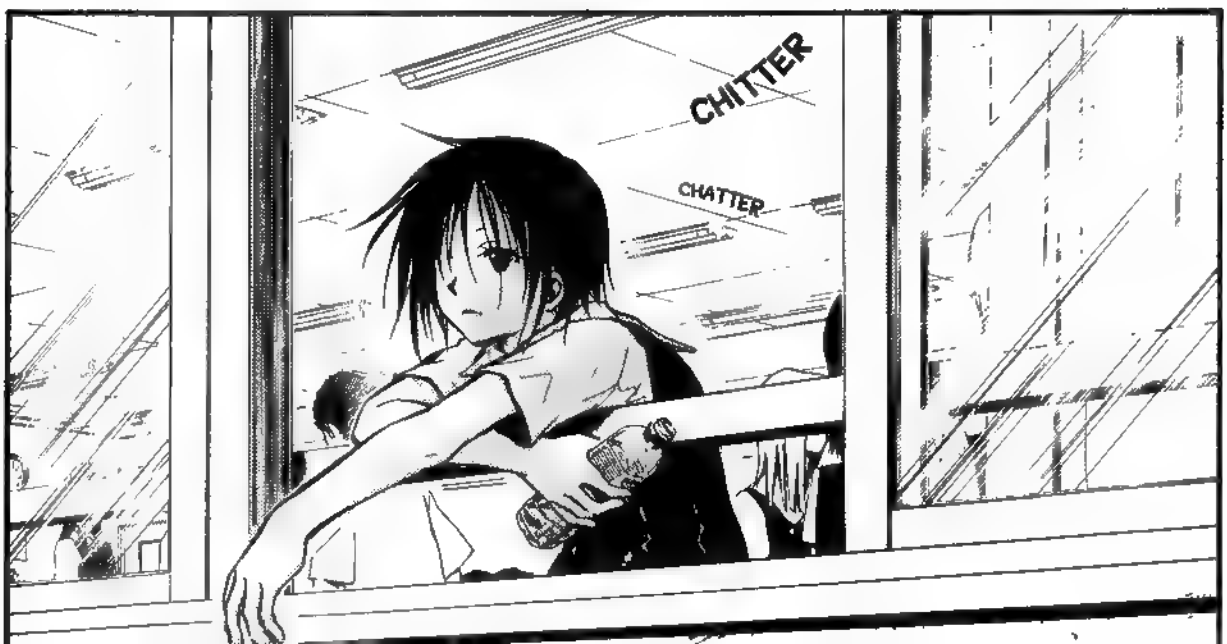
All he did was repeat the same phrase over and over...


Since I was the rabbit keeper, I'd been going to the hutch since the beginning of the school year.
And all I could do was watch in a daze as it was sealed up.

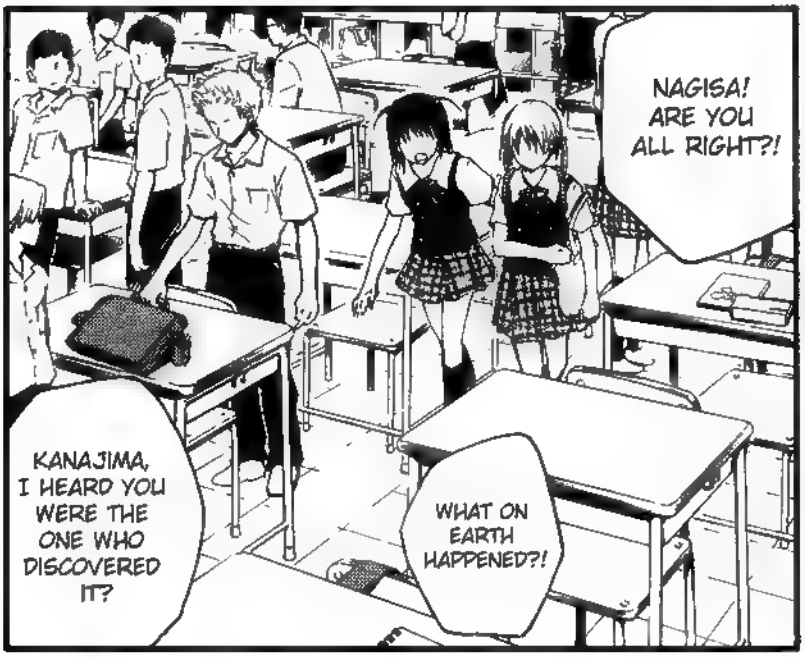

PAY ATTENTION IN CLASS, ALL RIGHT?
...RIGHT.

...THAT'S TRUE.

I THINK THIS IS ENOUGH...
THESE KIDS WERE ONLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISCOVERY,


CHITTER
CHATTER

Who did it?
Who? Who?
No idea.
This morning, the teachers were..
It's true! I saw it with my own eyes, the rabbits..
You mean the rabbits that were slaughtered?


NAGISA! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
KANAJIMA, I HEARD YOU WERE THE ONE WHO DISCOVERED IT?
WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED?!

SLIDE
AH.

HEY, LIMINO.

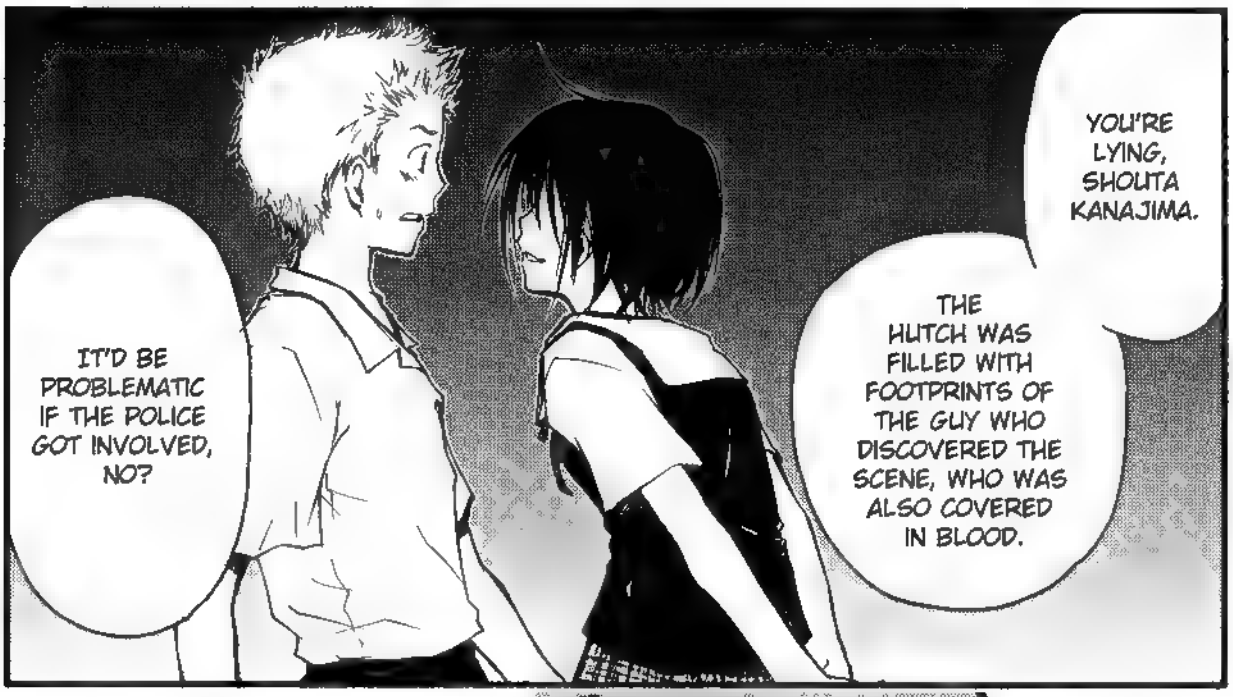
KANAJIMA?

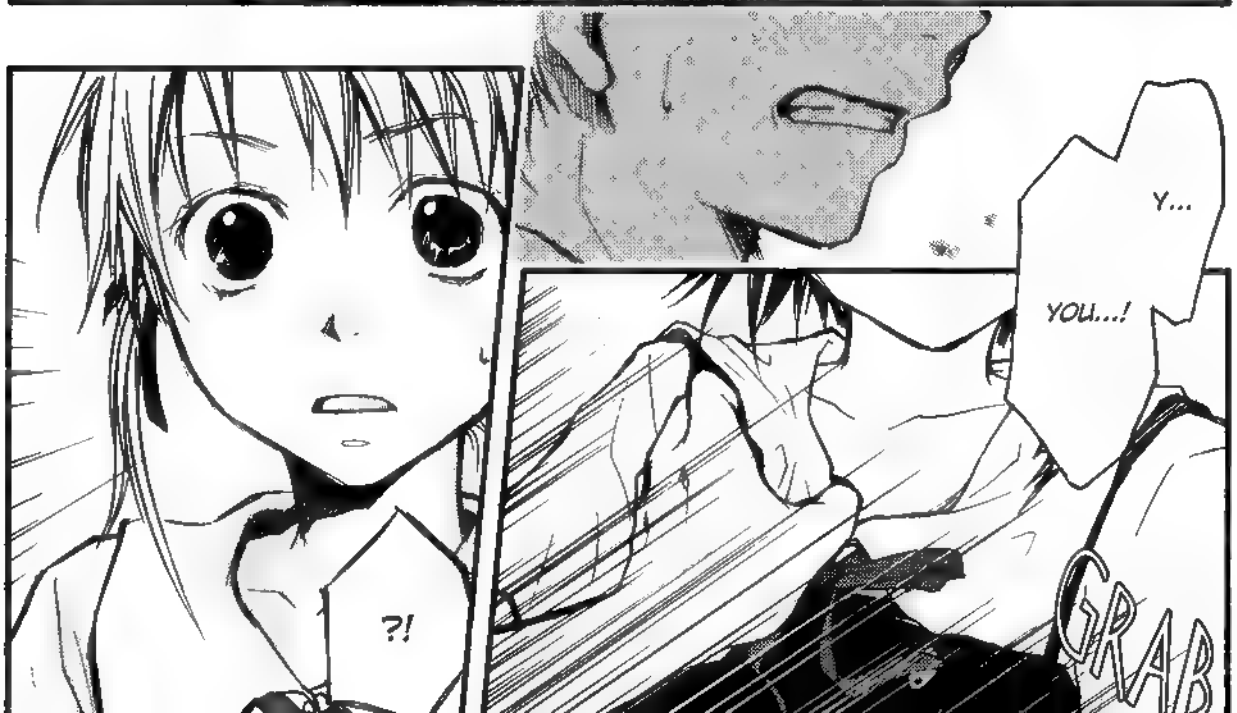
...
THE WOMAN OVER THERE WITH A LOOSE SCREW IN HER HEAD!
CHATTER
WAIT...
IT WAS YOU, WASN'T IT?!
BUT YOU SURE ARE EARLY TODAY!
YOU'RE USUALLY IN A RUSH SINCE YOU'RE PRACTICALLY LATE EVERY DAY.
I SAW IT ALL.

YOU TAGGED ALONG OFTEN WITH YAMADA TO THE RABBIT HUTCH, RIGHT?
SO. YOU MUST KNOW HOW TO OPEN THE LOCKS.
HOLD ON, KANAJIMA...
YOU CAME EARLY TO KILL THE RABBITS THAT WERE DEAR TO YAMADA, DIDN'T YOU?
AS LONG AS IT GETS YAMADA'S ATTENTION,
YOU'D DO ANYTHING, WOULDN'T YOU?!
!!
IF THAT'S SO, DON'T ASK ME OUT TO THE MOVIES.
Eh.
Really?!
WHY'RE YOU SO UPSET?
JUST THE SIGHT OF YOU MAKES ME ANGRY!

I GUESS NAGISA YAMADA SET IT.
THE COMBINATION ON THE LOCK WAS 527.
...
I RE-MEMBERED YOUR NAME, SHOUTA KANAJIMA.
I EVEN KNOW YOUR BIRTHDAY. THE 27TH OF MAY, RIGHT?
AH...
UNG...
TO SEE IF THERE IS ANY GUY IN OUR CLASS WITH A BIRTHDAY ON MAY 27.
No...
SO I INVESTIGATED,
DO YOU GET IT?
Stop it, Mokuzu...

YOU KNEW THE LOCK'S COMBINATION, DIDN'T YOU?
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE BEGGED HER TO HOOK YOU UP WITH ANOTHER GIRL.
IF YOU KNEW ABOUT NAGISA YAMADA'S FEELINGS...


IT'D BE PROBLEMATIC IF THE POLICE GOT INVOLVED, NO?
THE HUTCH WAS FILLED WITH FOOTPRINTS OF THE GUY WHO DISCOVERED THE SCENE, WHO WAS ALSO COVERED IN BLOOD.
YOU'RE LYING, SHOUTA KANAJIMA.

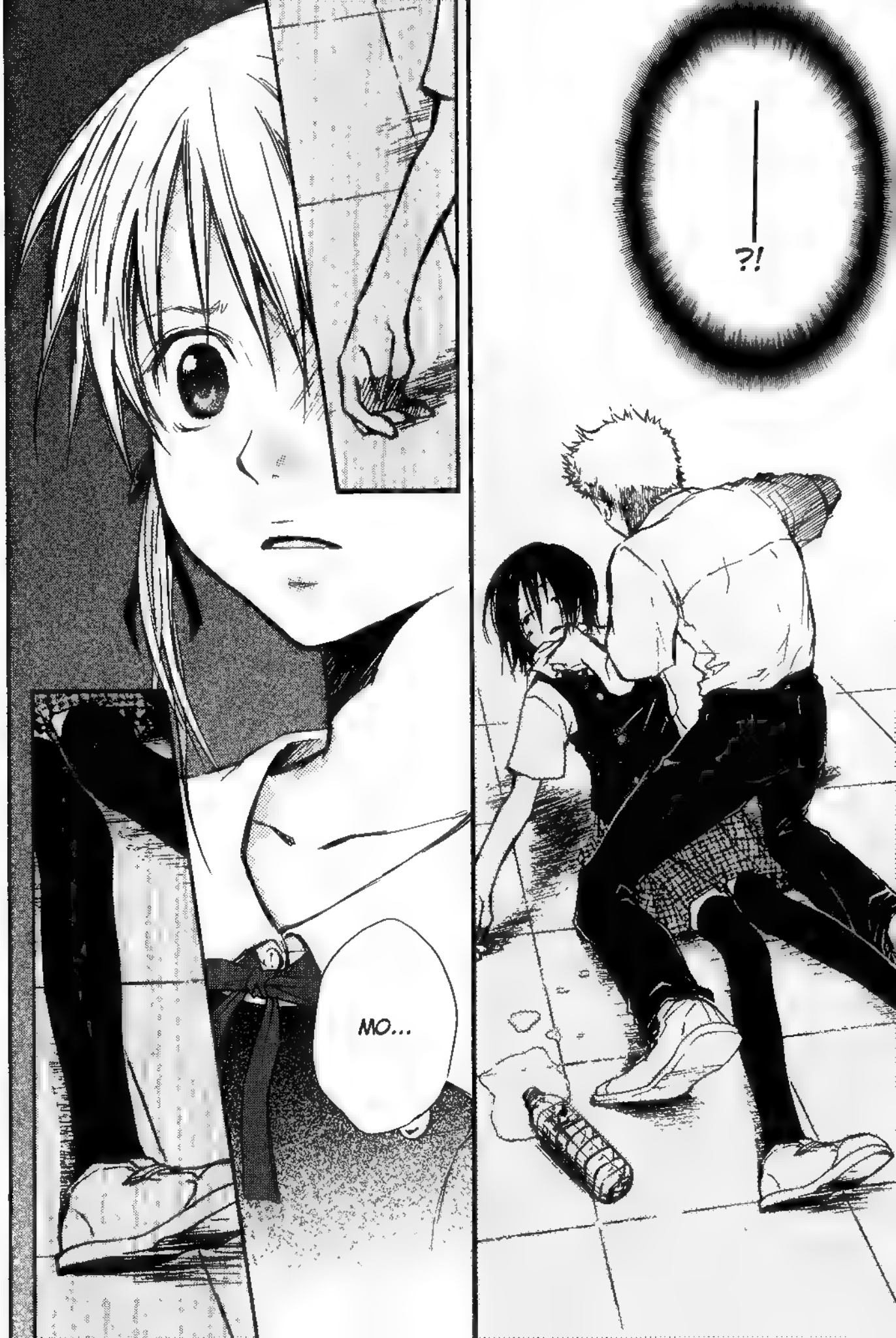

?!
Y...
YOU...!
GRAB

CRASH
POW
AHHHH!!

Someone stop him!
Kana jima!
punch
Some someone hurry.
Go get the teacher!
punch

What...
is this...

...AH,
...
AH...
punch
flop...
...

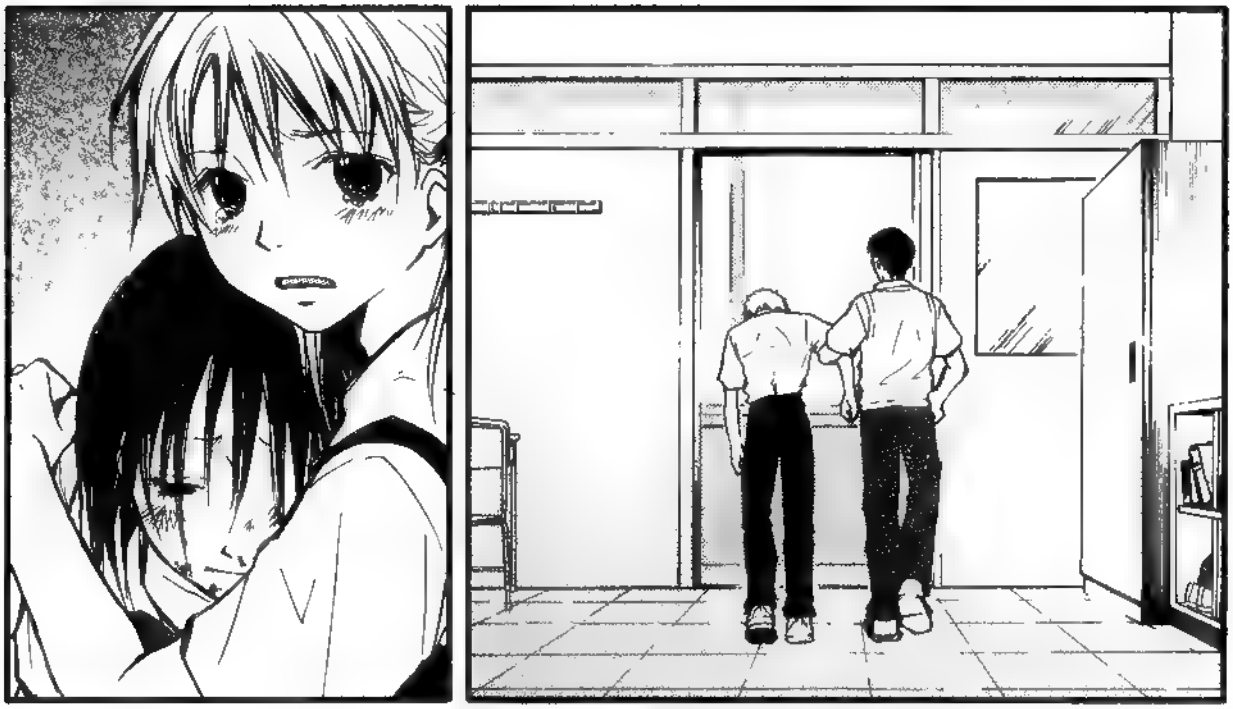

?!
MO...

...ST-
nnh
.....
nnh
STO...

RUSH
STOP IT KANAJIMA!
MOKUZU WILL D—
MOKUZU WILL DIE!!

KANAJIMA...
...AH.
WHY ARE YOU BEATING UP THE GIRL YOU LIKE...?
...UU,
AH...
WHY WOULD YOU DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT?!

SIR, KANAJIMA, HE...
KANA-JIMA!
GET UP, KANAJIMA.
YOU OBVIOUSLY LIKE MOKUZU A LOT, KANAJIMA,
WHY...
UU...
...
UU...



IT WAS HIM, HE DID IT...
THE RABBITS' KILLER, IT... WASN'T ME.

DON'T SPEAK, MOKUZU...

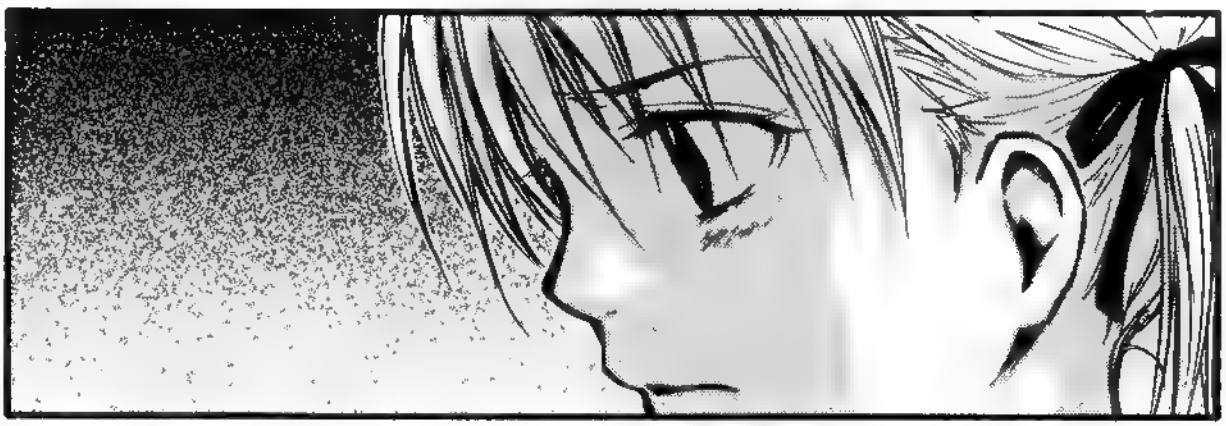
Nurse's Office

Thank you very much.
I'll take my leave then.
...
YAMADA, COULD YOU FETCH UMINO'S BAG?
YOU SHOULD GO HOME EARLY AND REST, TOO.
O—OKAY...

She has given up...
And if not, there's always death.

Because Mokuzu knew,
The violence will cease with time.

Mokuzu didn't put up any resistance when she was attacked.
She was simply waiting for Kanajima to vent out all his anger.



Typically, the literature of this time period—

—THEN, PLEASE READ THE NEXT PAGE, SATOU.
YES.
SLIDE
After some hesitation, I took Kanajima's bag as well.
I picked up Mokuzu's bag and my own.
tmp
When I think about tomorrow,
My spirits sink.
Nagisa,
See you tomorrow.
OKAY...

sniff...
Mokuzu will probably rest at home for a day or two.
Kanajima, on the other hand, might be suspended...
pause
...?

...
What's that smell...?
From the bag?!
IT'S NOT FROM KANAJIMA'S BAG.
ZIIIP...
Mokuzu's...?

run
Zip!
run

run

Nurse's Office

Mokuzu...

No matter how filthy you become,
No matter how strange your mind is,

Even if you are a terrorist armed with candy bullets,
I can't bring myself to hate you, Mokuzu Umino.
slip

Watching the bruised sleeping face of that cruel girl,
I felt an indescribable sense of unease.
The reason behind my uneasiness...
Was still unknown to me back then.

I BELIEVE THAT STOCKHOLM SYNDROME CAN HAPPEN EVEN IN ONE'S HOME.
TAKE FOR EXAMPLE, CHILD ABUSE.
IF YOU'RE UNDER HOUSE ARREST AND SUFFER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF ABUSE,
FROM AN ASSAILANT THAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO LOVE AND DEPEND ON FOR LOVE,
WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN?
snap
IN COMPARISON WITH A CHILD WHO HAS NEVER BEEN ABUSED, THESE KIDS ARE MORE PRONE TO AGGRESSION, DEPRESSION, AND ADORATION FOR THEIR PARENTS.
DUE TO THIS IMPAIRMENT ON THEIR COGNITIVE FUNCTIONS,
THEY DEVELOP AN INTENSE LOVE FOR THEIR HEARTLESS PARENTS.
THEY DON'T RECOGNIZE THAT THEIR PARENTS ARE WRONG.
SOME MAY EVEN PLACE THE BLAME ON THEMSELVES.

I KNOW...

WHO YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...